

Fact Sheet



Division of Mining, Land & Water
June 2003

Title: Commercial Recreation Registration

The Department of Natural Resources (DNR) will begin to gather basic information about location, amount and type of commercial day use recreation occurring on state land. The level of commercial recreation activities occurring on state land is increasing. Many of these activities do not require permits; therefore, DNR has not been able to obtain much of the commercial recreation use data needed to make informed land management decisions. This lack of information makes it difficult for DNR to react to the issues when they occur, to protect existing use by residents, and to protect the commercial recreation use that is an important part of the Alaskan economy.

To acquire this information, DNR adopted regulations creating a registration system for day use of state land by commercial recreation operators. This new requirement became effective December 7, 2002. DNR recognizes that there are many different types of commercial recreation occurring on state lands. In this initial phase of implementation, DNR will begin registration for commercial recreation activities on all state-owned tidelands and uplands, including shorelands and fresh water bodies. DNR understands that this registration system will not capture all commercial recreation use on state lands. Some time after implementation, DNR will evaluate the registration program and make any necessary modifications.

What is commercial recreation?

Commercial recreation is the recreation use of land, water, and resources for business or financial gain. Commercial recreation includes, but is not limited to business activities such as guided sport fishing, guided and outfitted sport hunting, guided recreation, and air and water taxi services that provide transportation to recreational users of state land.

Commercial recreation does not include those businesses that provide auxiliary support to the recreation activity but are not part of the recreation use of state land. For instance, boat rental companies, food concessionaires or tackle shops are not considered commercial recreation.

Why did DNR create a registration system?

To properly manage the growing use of state land throughout Alaska, DNR needs to understand the commercial recreation use that occurs. While commercial recreation is not the only use of state land, it is a substantial use that can be measured. The registration system includes data gathering that, over time, will be useful in determining trends, impacts, concentrations, and periods of use. The data may also be useful to provide operators with information to evaluate changes to levels and types of activities.

What will DNR do with this registration information?

DNR will create an interactive database that will allow DNR managers to query such things as use levels, types of activities, and concentrations of use. This data will allow managers to make more informed decisions concerning use, impacts and management of state lands. DNR may also create a public access database with this information.

Who has to register?

All commercial recreation businesses that use state uplands, shorelands, tidelands, and fresh water bodies must register.

At this time, day use commercial recreation businesses that exclusively operate on salt water, without taking clients ashore on state-owned tidelands or uplands, are not required to register. Air or water taxi services that drop clients off on state tidelands for guided or unguided recreation must register. Air or water taxi services are not required to register the transportation of non-recreation oriented passengers or business services such as delivering supplies to commercial fisherman or transporting people to their remote cabin site.

Commercial recreation businesses that occasionally use state land must also register.

For instance, a commercial horse pack outfitter that occasionally crosses state land or a kayak guide who brings clients onto a beach for lunch during day excursions would both need to register.

Those commercial recreation businesses with a camp or facility, whether occupied or unoccupied, that remains overnight on state land must first obtain a land use permit or lease from DNR. Those commercial recreation businesses that already have permits or leases to operate on state land are required to register any commercial recreation day use regardless of whether it is directly related to the permits or leases. If the business already has a permit or lease from DNR for commercial recreation, there is no additional fee for this registration.

How do I register?

You can register on-line at <http://www.dnr.state.ak.us/mlw/commrec>. You may also print off a registration form to fill in and mail to DNR. You may also visit or contact a DNR information office in Juneau, Fairbanks or Anchorage to register or obtain a hardcopy (paper) form to fill out.

What does it cost?

When a registration is completed on-line, whether payment is mailed in or submitted on-line, the fee is \$25 per year. If the registration is submitted in hard copy, the fee is \$50 per year.

When do I register?

Commercial recreation operators need to register before they begin their commercial recreation day use of state land each calendar year. Registration should be completed at least 30 days in advance of the expected use.

What if I do not know how many clients I will have in a given year?

You must give your best estimate. Because this is not a permit and there is no per-client fee, some inaccuracies are understandable. DNR will evaluate the accuracy of the data with feedback from businesses, and modify the registration if needed.

Do I receive a permit or any additional rights by registering?

No, commercial recreation day use is now a generally allowed use that does not require a

permit if registered. The registration is not a permit or a disposal of an interest in land, and does not establish a preference right to any land use authorization or disposal. The registration does not grant any exclusive use for an individual or business.

What happens if I don't register?

By regulation, day use of state land for commercial recreation purposes is generally allowed **only** if the business first registers their activity with DNR. By not registering you are in trespass and can be treated as such. The intent of this registration system is not to penalize businesses, but to gather data necessary to allow DNR to better manage the state's resources. Your registration will help create the quality of resource management that you expect and that your growing business is relying upon.

When registering, if I do not know what game management unit in which I operate, how do I determine the units?

Maps of the game management units can be found in the on-line registration form or in one of the DNR information offices.

Where can I look up the actual regulation?

11 AAC 96.018 sets the registration requirements. 11 AAC 96.250 has applicable definitions. You can find these regulations on-line at:

<http://www.legis.state.ak.us/folhome.htm>

Contact offices:

Anchorage:
DNR Public Information Center
550 W. 7th Ave. Ste. 1260
Anchorage, AK 99501-3557
(907) 269-8400
M-F 10:00 am to 5:00 pm

Fairbanks:
DNR Public Information Center
3700 Airport Way
Fairbanks, AK 99709-4699
(907) 451-2705
M-F 10:00 am to 5:00 pm

Juneau:
MLW Land Information Office
400 Willoughby St, Ste 400
Juneau, AK 99801
(907) 465-3511
M-F 8:00 am to 5:00 pm